

## Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

### Introduction

#### Background

Missouri began working on the Self-Assessment component of the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP) in July 2000, and the Self-Assessment was submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in October 2002. The Self-Assessment process involved an analysis of existing data, and resulted in improved data collection methodologies, establishment of baselines, and most importantly, an increased focus on performance and outcomes of students with disabilities. Subsequent to the completion of the Self-Assessment, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAP) worked through a process which identified two priority areas. These areas were Elementary Achievement and Post-Secondary Outcomes. A third priority, monitoring of city/county jails, was added as a result of a finding of noncompliance in OSEP's response to the Self-Assessment.

The Division worked with Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center (GLARRC) to design a process to arrive at strategies to address the priority areas. GLARRC facilitated two 2-day meetings with two groups of stakeholders during April 2003. One group dealt with elementary achievement and the second group dealt with post-secondary outcomes. The objectives for the initial meetings were

- To generate, clarify, classify and prioritize causal factors that inhibit a coordinated system and
- To analyze the root causes that inhibit a coordinated system.

The objectives for the second set of meetings were

- To review the system of root causes/barriers and improve outcomes
- To generate clarify, classify and prioritize strategies
- To construct alternative profiles of recommended strategies
- To build consensus on the profile of strategies and
- To map the influence relationship of the consensus profile.

The Improvement Plan, submitted to OSEP in July 2003, is a result of the work of these stakeholders.

#### Recent Developments

The Division is highly committed to the priority areas identified by the Special Education Advisory Committee and to the strategies outlined in the Improvement Plan and this Annual Performance Report. The Division was awarded a State Improvement Grant (SIG) that focuses on improving elementary achievement and post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities which will serve to enhance these strategies.

A recent addition to Special Education resources available to school districts is Special Education Consultants located in Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDCs). These consultants are playing a major role in the implementation of the SIG scope of work. Special Education RPDC Consultants work with school districts, RPDC staff and other state consultants and supervisors to improve student academic performance in districts and/or schools as identified through data analysis and the priority school process. Special education RPDC consultants deliver and support Division of Special Education professional development initiatives including those relative to meeting performance goals and indicators.

Missouri was awarded a State Improvement Grant (SIG) August 2004. SIG dollars were earmarked to address elementary achievement, post-secondary outcomes and Part C to Part B transition. In order to allocate SIG dollars for elementary achievement and secondary transition, districts were grouped by RPDC regions and ranked by various performance measures. Approximately 50 districts were selected and notified that they were eligible to use SIG awards for professional development or programs to increase performance. These districts are working with the special education consultants to analyze data in order to develop improvement plans at which time the SIG awards can be used to implement the improvement plans.

Simultaneously to identifying districts for SIG assistance, Missouri was working to create a pilot process for focused monitoring of which elementary achievement and secondary transition are areas of focus. Ten districts that had been identified through the SIG analysis were having district accreditation reviews during 2004-05, and were therefore selected for the focused monitoring pilot process. DESE staff are currently conducting the focused monitoring reviews which include data analysis, file reviews and interviews with students, parents and district staff.

Both the SIG improvement planning process and the focused monitoring process will be evaluated at the end of 2004-05 and district progress will be monitored over the next several years.

**Explanation of “Future Activities” sections**

- Cluster/Probe – Refers to the cluster(s) and/or probe(s) to which the activity pertains
- Improvement Strategies – General description of the activity
- Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets – More detailed activities which will lead towards attainment of targets
- Timelines – Planned timeline for completion of activity
- Resources – Designates section responsibilities and funding type